

**HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
April 7, 2015**

Present

Councilor Mike Beilstein, Chair  
Councilor Frank Hann  
Councilor Bill Glassmire

Staff

Nancy Brewer, City Manager  
Biff Traber, Mayor  
Jon Sassaman, Police Chief  
Kent Weiss, Housing & Neighborhood Services Division Mgr  
Carrie Mullens, City Manager's Office

Visitors

Anne Schuster, Benton County Commissioner  
Aleita Hass Holcombe, Corvallis Daytime Drop-In Center (CDDC)  
Kari Whitacre, Community Outreach, Inc. (COI) Executive Director  
Marisha Johnson, Community Services Consortium (CSC) Director of Housing & Energy Services  
Lara Lwin Treadaway  
Kathleen Harrington  
Karen Albrecht  
Edward James Barker  
Angela Reid  
Scott Washu Treadaway, Muddy Creek Satyagraha

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION**

	Agenda Item	Recommendations
	Call to Order	2:01 pm
	Chair to call for corrections, if any, to April 7 HSC minutes	
I.	Simple Shelter Requests	Information
II.	Other Business	None
	Adjournment	4:58 pm
	Next Meeting	April 21, 2015, Madison Ave Meeting Room, 500 SW Madison Avenue

**CONTENT OF DISCUSSION**

I. Simple Shelter Requests

Chair Beilstein said the staff report responds to requests that had been made by representatives from Simple Shelter. The City recently learned that Simple Shelter has disbanded. He added that the availability of public restrooms throughout the year and late at night in many locations is important to him. The results of previous reviews by Council and staff revealed that the City is doing the best it can under current constraints to respond to this issue.

Mayor Traber and Anne Schuster testified as co-chairs of the Homeless Oversight Committee (HOC). Mayor Traber explained that this multi-agency committee oversees activities of Benton County's Ten-Year Plan to Address Issues Surrounding Homelessness. HOC meetings are open to the public and held on the fourth Wednesday of every month at 1:30 pm in the Benton County Board of Commissioners Meeting Room, 205 NW 5th Street. HOC coordinates Ten-Year Plan activities between local service organizations. HOC is assessing the Ten-Year Plan to understand current activities and determine if goals should be reset or reconsidered. Mayor Traber

distributed an analysis of the assessment (Attachment A). He suggested that the Human Services Committee (HSC) may want to interact with HOC in the future and City Council may want to consider working with this multi-agency committee.

Commissioner Schuster added that HOC has never been a formal committee. She and Mayor Traber have discussed entering into a partnership in relation to the HOC to obtain collaboration and direction for projects. Previously, HOC provided updates of the Ten-Year Plan to local organizations (e.g., City Club) and participated in Homeless Connect, a one-day event offering immediate services to homeless individuals. It is hoped that HOC can become more structured and provide a way for agencies to choose strategies they are interested in conducting and being responsible for. HOC discussed adopting three projects that the City and County can work on together.

Mayor Traber added that as new co-chairs of HOC, he and Commissioner Schuster are trying to define what HOC has been attempting to accomplish. HOC has been discussing opportunities for administrative support and he may return to HSC with a request for financial support and suggestions about the role Council may want to have in collaboration with HOC.

Chair Beilstein said, although he knew about the Ten-Year Plan and HOC, he did not understand there was no administrative support budget. He inquired whether the three projects mentioned by Commissioner Schuster would be based on cooperation with other agencies.

Mayor Traber clarified that Benton County and Samaritan Health provided funding during the first five-year period of the Ten-Year Plan. The funding was for administrative support and an Adult Services Team for case management type activities.

Kari Whitacre clarified that two years ago Benton County began funding administrative oversight of HOC, Homeless Connect, and the Adult Services Team. Prior to that, there was no budget for administrative support.

Chair Beilstein opined that oversight is necessary due to the number of agencies working on the same issue. He inquired whether HOC is the best venue for that oversight. He said it may be more appropriate for another agency, such as COI, to serve as the oversight for dealing with this issue.

Mayor Traber agreed that the question needs to be examined. He opined that HOC is the oversight for the Ten-Year Plan activities as a neutral party since the service organizations are conducting the activities. The initial development of the Ten-Year Plan was mostly staffed by CSC. Commissioner Schuster identified HOC partners as Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services, Habitat for Humanity, Homeless Shelter Coalition, CDDC, CSC, and many others.

In response to Chair Beilstein's inquiry, Commissioner Schuster said there are philosophical differences between the agencies so having an unbiased oversight committee is useful and valuable. Commissioner Schuster said HOC recently discussed data collection in relation to requesting grants and funding. As a neutral party, HOC can help facilitate that need.

Mayor Traber said HOC requests assistance with direction by HSC and/or City Council. He opined that the discussions about homelessness and the requests similar to what was brought forward by Simple Shelter need to continue.

Commissioner Schuster confirmed for Councilor Hann that Attachment A is a self-assessment tool. She noted that the handout is only part of the full assessment report.

In response to Councilor Hann's inquiries, Mayor Traber explained that the rating scale was zero to five. When the assessment was being conducted not all of the agencies were present which is why some of the goals have not been rated.

Councilor Hann referred to Goal 3, Strategy 2: Job Training, and said the state has some responsibilities under this goal. He inquired about other primary partners. Mayor Traber agreed that the state has some responsibility and HOC needs to clarify responsibilities for some of the strategies. The Ten-Year Plan identifies agencies that "may be involved" without identifying agencies that accept responsibility for making progress on a strategy. Having specific agencies accept responsibility will provide better accountability.

Commissioner Schuster added that after additional analysis some strategies may be removed and others added. She offered to forward the full analysis document.

Councilor Hann reported that during a recent HSC meeting with United Way of Benton and Lincoln Counties (UWBLC), a discussion was held about consolidation or centralization of services to eliminate duplication of services. He asked if this is part of the HOC concept.

Commission Schuster said UWBLC attends the HOC meetings. Members hope 2-1-1 Info can be one method of centralizing the dissemination of information.

Lara Lwin Treadaway said she had been acting as an intermediary for Simple Shelter. The group was a coalition of people representing those living unhoused in the community. The requests forwarded by Simple Shelter came from the people who are directly impacted by the issues in the request.

Chair Beilstein said the City responded to each individual request made by Simple Shelter. The City has no control over many of the requests as noted in the staff report. For example, the fairgrounds are outside of City Limits and owned by Benton County. Council has repeatedly looked at issues related to camping and has never found camping to be an acceptable solution. He clarified that decision was based on location, neighborhood complaints, land availability, and other issues. Designating park lands for camping areas removes other park uses. After neighbors objected to the campground in Willamette Park the area is being converted into a community garden.

In response to Ms. Lwin Treadaway inquiry about a solution for people sleeping in the street tonight, Chair Beilstein suggested they do not do so.

Councilor Hann said the purpose of the meeting is to review the requests submitted by Simple Shelter. Some of the requests are outside of the City's purview and nothing can be done about them by the City. There are existing groups trying to work on this very

complex issue. It is not as simple as addressing one issue without addressing other issues. This is the beginning of a discussion for HSC. Many of the solutions submitted by Simple Shelter do not quite work. Everyone recognizes that everyone needs a place to sleep that is warm and safe; however, HSC does not have answers today. HSC is gathering information to find answers and solutions.

Ms. Lwin Treadaway opined that homelessness is being normalized in society similar to how slavery was normalized for 300 years. She believes that in the future people will look back and see this situation as something that should have never happened. She said it is horrifying to think that human beings are not having their basic needs for shelter met from one night to the next. They face challenges each day as the result of being in this position. It is possible to stop ticketing people for illegal camping so they can have shelter. That action only requires a decision. She said she understands HSC is working within protocols, bureaucracy, and process, but at some point one has to engage their hearts and minds to say it is enough. She hopes this situation can be resolved quicker than the 300 years it took to end slavery.

Ms. Lwin Treadaway said she is very connected with the homeless community and has worked with them in different capacities. One immediate issue that concerns her is the actions of the police. Some members of the audience were given citations without prior warning, discussion, or questioning about the context or circumstances under which they might be committing minor misdemeanors. She referred to a report that was published last year from the *Institute for Policy Studies* called "The Poor Get Prison." The report examines a growing phenomenon in the United States of local communities criminalizing poverty; ticketing, arresting, and jailing people for misdemeanor offenses, debt, and lack of resources. She provided an example:

- Jim Barker received two violations last month. One \$150 citation was for urinating in the bushes in Central Park. If Officer Dodge had taken the time to talk to him, he would have discovered that Mr. Barker is 72 years old with a medical issue related to his bladder and he was hospitalized for this condition shortly after receiving the citation. The public toilet in Central Park was full to overflowing as Mr. Barker had discovered earlier that day. The nearest toilet was in the CDDC at First Christian Church, which was too far for Mr. Barker to walk at that time. Mr. Barker made sure no one could see him before he stepped into the bushes. He did not see anyone else in the park at that time. These facts make his issue more complex. The information was not considered by Officer Dodge because Officer Dodge did not ask any questions. After Mr. Barker informed City Manager Brewer about the overflowing toilets, the toilets were emptied throughout the City.

Ms. Lwin Treadaway said these types of issues are happening on a daily basis. When she contacted Officer Dodge about the above example, he was not interested in anything she had to say. She would prefer conversations be scheduled with the Police Department about this kind of issue. She provided another example:

- The previous *Corvallis Gazette-Times* building at the intersection of SW 6th and SW Jefferson has a no-trespassing sign on the building. A bench is located behind the curb near that building. People have been ticketed for trespassing while sitting on the bench even though no one can see the no-trespassing sign from the bench. Mr. Barker, who has bad knees, received another \$150 ticket last month for

trespassing because he was sitting on the bench. On another occasion an elderly lady was sitting on the same bench and it is not believed she received a ticket.

Councilor Hann explained that Councilors cannot comment or offer opinions on legal action.

Ms. Lwin Treadaway responded that she is not interested in an exchange of opinions. She wants to know where the City goes from here with the facts presented and knowing that the situation some people are in is a result of police action.

Councilor Hann said there are mechanisms in place for communicating with the police. Accessing those communication systems and avenues are the best opportunity.

Chair Beilstein said he understands that the police are reluctant to issue tickets to the homeless population. Ms. Lwin Treadaway reiterated that she was not interested in hearing opinions.

Chair Beilstein continued by explaining that the Corvallis Policing Forum meets monthly. Anyone interested in discussing protocols and/or policies is welcome to attend and participate. Complaints about police actions are first heard by the Police Department and forwarded to the Community Police Review Advisory Board if the response is not satisfactory. He added that the examples provided by Ms. Lwin Treadaway most likely have another interpretation that would need to be heard.

Councilor Hann added that he is willing to hear about the incidents. He does not want people to be disappointed by thinking HSC can take action related to the incidents. There are other mechanisms in place that are more appropriate.

Kathleen Harrington said she has received a 24-hour illegal camping notice every four days for camping. People cannot spend their time moving camp if they have important things to do. When City staff removes one's belongings, they are placed in a dumpster. She keeps a clean camp and encourages other people to keep their camps clean. She noted that there is nowhere to put garbage and people are cited with theft of services if they put their garbage in dumpsters. After having back surgery in July she was posted for camping. A Police Officer and staff from Parks and Recreation gave her one week to move and yet both Departments came back during the same week and gave her 20 minutes to gather her belongings. Because she could not gather everything within 20 minutes, she was given a citation. She does not want to have to move every four days. She does not want to be homeless. She wants a place with a bathroom and shower and a place to make a fire. She camps so far out that everyday getting in and out of camp she is covered with dirt and mud. She washes her clothes twice per week and cannot take enough clothes into camp because they get wet and dirty. A small pile of clean clothes molds quickly. She agreed that there are people who do not care and only want to drink.

Ms. Lwin Treadaway said the practice of giving people 20 minutes, 24 hours, or 48 hours to move their homes when they are already living in insecure circumstances needs to change.

In response to Councilor Hann's inquiry about needs, Ms. Harrington said she pays \$52/month for storage and \$25/month for a phone. She experiences headaches several times each week due to heating her tent with a propane lantern. She said it is demeaning being homeless and inquired why homelessness was so prevalent now since it was not a problem 25 or 30 years ago.

Councilor Hann added that some towns have truck stops located nearby that offer pay showers. He inquired about other unique issues in Corvallis that make it difficult for the homeless population.

Ms. Harrington said public restrooms in Corvallis are rare and restrooms in parks are locked during the winter. Newport has public showers available for a small fee.

Ms. Harrington clarified for Chair Beilstein that the women's shelter is closed and even though her dog is a certified service animal, it is not allowed in the women's shelter and other facilities such as COI and Osborn Aquatic Center (OAC). The CDDC makes showers available on Mondays, but she cannot always be there on Mondays. There are no laundry facilities available at CDDC. She feels lucky to have a storage unit. She works at the CDDC and for a couple other people, but does not earn enough to afford a home.

Karen Albrecht testified that she received a 24-hour illegal camping notice on March 17 at 8:30 pm. At 9:20 pm on the same day she received a ticket. She now owes another \$100 that she cannot pay. She noted that she was camping on Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) property, not City property. She has repeatedly been harassed about camping without any activity occurring that would require police response. She said she also keeps a clean camp and hauls her garbage out. She would like to get up in the morning, take a shower, put on clean clothes, and go to a job or job interview. She does not currently have a change of clothing. Every three months she can acquire a voucher for laundry services and once per month she can obtain free clothing from Vina Moses. Not having a safe place for herself and her belongings is stressful and has caused health issues. Last November she was treated for kidney cancer and needs to schedule a follow-up appointment. She has not scheduled that appointment because she does not have access to a shower or clean clothes. She does not have a solution, but knows there needs to be one. There are not enough resources in the community. Offering showers once per week only works if there are not too many people showering on that day. The CDDC facility cannot provide for everyone. The cycle prevents many people from obtaining jobs and moving forward. Basic needs should be available on a day-to-day basis.

Ms. Albrecht added that some businesses do not allow a homeless person into their business. She has been trespassed from all Safeway stores for holding up a sign asking for help. There needs to be a year-round shelter and/or an area where camping is allowed and people will not be harassed by the police. Her fines for illegal camping will go to collections because she cannot afford to pay them. This impacts her credit which impacts her ability to find housing and a job. These issues are compounded over and over.

Councilor Hann said living in a tent is not a permanent solution. He asked Ms. Albrecht what she would need financially to have a place to stay if she had a job. Ms. Albrecht responded that a room would cost at least \$500 per month. Additionally, she would be required to pay an application fee. With other expenses she would need between \$1,000 and \$1,500 just to secure a room and there would be no point if she did not have the income to maintain the living standards.

Councilor Hann said he has been researching homelessness and agrees there is a mixture of issues related to a more permanent solution, such as medical care, housing costs, and other related costs. Some solutions only respond to one issue without providing more permanent solutions.

Ms. Albrecht said she understands that only providing cottages for people to live in is not an adequate or viable solution. There is no goal to do anything more. Having a place to stay and facilities for basic needs (showers, laundry) is important. People need these basic needs to be able to look for work. They need a place where their belongings are safe and they can sleep and shower and look for work. She said her belongings have been stolen and/or removed many times and she has only been able to retrieve her belongings once. Each notice indicates a 30-day time period to retrieve personal belongings. When an Officer posts a 24-hour notice, they immediately contact Parks and Recreation, if you are camped on City property. Parks and Recreation staff hauls away the belongings and puts them into a dumpster along with garbage and dog feces. The only way to retrieve your belongings is to climb into the dumpster and go through all of the garbage.

In response to Chair Beilstein's inquiry, Ms. Albrecht said she cannot access the shelters with her husband and COI and Partner's Place do not have available space.

Ms. Harrington added that Partner's Place holds an orientation once per month and clients are placed on a waiting list until a vacancy opens. Partner's Place is shared rooms, mostly single men, and they do not allow men and women to share a room.

Ms. Albrecht noted that COI has many restrictions and regulations. She is not legally married and does not believe COI will let her stay there with her partner. COI treats its clients like 15-year-olds. COI is not permanent and clients are only allowed to stay a few months.

Ms. Lwin Treadaway said staying at COI does not solve the issue. In the interim there is the issue of illegal camping. There is no temporary solution until there is a permanent solution. She mentioned Allen Nolan who is known in the homeless population as Santa Claus. Mr. Nolan has cancer and only a few weeks to live. He left Hospice because he wants to die at home with his family and friends. His home is on the streets and his family is on the streets. His choice would be that his needs would be met for his last few weeks.

Ms. Lwin Treadaway would prefer to collaborate as a community and with Parks and Recreation to place a moratorium on illegal camping until a solution for housing can be reached without homelessness being criminalized. She noted that she has a good

relationship with Parks and Recreation and would like to build a relationship with the Police Department. Ms. Harrington added that a pay campground would be helpful.

Ms. Albrecht said she was living under a bridge at one point and a gentleman from Korea asked to take her picture. When she asked him why he said it was because of how she was living. He explained that there are no people living on the streets in Korea because they are all put into homes.

Chair Beilstein opined that there has never been a time or place when there were not homeless individuals. The person from Korea was most likely speaking out of ignorance.

Ms. Albrecht agreed that some people choose to be homeless. She hopes there can be an option for the others.

Edward James Barker described himself as a troubleshooter and said he enjoys helping people. There is a lot of land owned by Landmark Realty and other realty and land management companies. Some of the land could be resurveyed and reused for the needs of the people. There is a lot of public land available. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is ending their land management leaving a lot of land available for any type of use. BLM land could be used for projects for veterans, elderly, organic gardening, etc. It is easy to setup facilities for bathrooms and water. All of the parks need public restrooms open all of the time. The day after the restrooms were cleaned and opened at Riverfront Commemorative Park more than 400 people visited the walkway. The restrooms at Willamette Park and by the Van Buren Bridge are now open. Restrooms need to be clean and safe for children who frequent parks. Mr. Barker reviewed his skills that ranged from farm work to scouts to the military and mill industry.

Ms. Lwin Treadaway added that Mr. Barker has the knowledge and skills necessary to bring a project forward. There are other people in the homeless community with knowledge and skills that want to help locate land and build a community.

Chair Beilstein responded that the City does not have available land or other resources to do this. If the homeless population found a property owner who was willing to develop their property for the homeless community, the City might consider changes to the Land Development Code when permits were requested.

In response to Ms. Lwin Treadaway's inquiries, Chair Beilstein said if there was land available for the purpose of building a model homeless community, the proposal would be reviewed by the Planning Division. If the proposal met existing land use codes, it may be possible to move forward with the project. If the proposal is denied because it does not meet certain criteria and/or has requests for variations to the code, a public hearing could be held with the Planning Commission, and depending on the outcome with the City Council.

Chair Beilstein suggested the homeless community work with existing organizations, such as COI, CSC, Homeless Coalition, HOC, and others to move forward.

Councilor Glassmire suggested the community find the land first. Until the land can be identified, there is no possibility to move forward.

Councilor Hann referred to the CoHo CoHousing project that took a lengthy amount of time modifying development regulations to allow it. The Planning Division helps citizens through the codes and other requirements. No one is refusing to help. The idea has merit and it has obviously been thought through to try to solve a problem. BLM land is far away from services. He added that there are a lot of details to work out that cannot be resolved today.

Angela Reid said the homeless community also needs access to counseling. People need to feel better about themselves. She prefers to use the term "houseless." It is a structure the community is seeking. The foundation of that structure is the ability to assert oneself in a sober, healthy manner. Houseless individuals need to be straight within themselves. Providing a house does not solve this issue. Outreach needs to be included for people to overcome their own ailments that have been brought on by being houseless. When belongings are taken away from someone who barely has anything, they are left with nothing. This causes more of an eyesore to the community.

Chair Beilstein stated agreement and added that finding housing is only a part of the spiritual development. Councilor Hann said there is not just one element. It is not about food or housing or clothing. It is all of these and more.

Chair Beilstein said the City provides resources to the Homeless Coalition and other agencies. Counseling services provided through CDDC focus on case management and identify needed resources and barriers. This is a very valuable service to individuals.

Aleita Hass Holcombe said the "grass roots" have come together to present to the City ten items (Simple Shelter requests) that are significant needs that have been reoccurring themes for many years and that have been brought forward before. The responses are similar because of political will. Other communities are changing policies and political will to embrace the reality of their communities. There is more homelessness now than there was in the 1980s. Children are camping and sleeping in cars. There are items on the Simple Shelter requests that can be resolved or at least considered. Developing the Ten-Year Plan was "awesome." This community reviewed homelessness as a large picture; how individuals get to the point of homelessness, how to prevent homelessness, and how to remove people from homelessness. The HOC has modeled itself after Albany to provide an Adult Services Team. That Team sees a lot of people and meets with many social service agencies to identify a one-stop place for people to find help.

Ms. Hass Holcombe said the level of poverty she observes being criminalized is wrong. This homeless community does not have the ability to initiate obtaining housing. There needs to be different solutions. The ten items brought forward from Simple Shelter is a good way to start the discussion. There are church communities in Eugene that allow car camping. The cars are registered by license plate number each night. Having a moratorium on ticketing illegal camping until land can be found and/or the permanent shelter opens in 2018 are options that can be discussed and approved. There are people in the homeless community that have hundreds of dollars in fines that they will never be able to pay. This continues the cycle of criminalizing poverty. There needs to be broader opportunities for employment. There are no jobs here for limited skills. This needs to be explored and resolved.

Councilor Hann posed the following questions:

Jobs are very critical and a major component. What does it take in our community for a family to meet basic essentials in terms of income/jobs? What do the rent levels need to be for people to afford housing?

*Ms. Harrington: Minimum wage jobs will not pay for basic needs.*

*Ms. Hass Holcombe: \$300/month.*

*Ms. Brewer: If rent was \$500/month, a fulltime, \$10/hour job would be needed to pay the rent and other expenses. This meets the maximum amount advised for housing at 30-35% of income. Fulltime, \$10/hour jobs are difficult to find in Corvallis without some education and skill set.*

*Ms. Hass Holcombe: That is the minimum amount needed and does include background checks and security deposits.*

*Ms. Reid: My rent is \$575/month and I have a washer and dryer. I am a single mom with a teenager. It is a continual struggle. She is constantly feeding the neighborhood and people are always sleeping at her home. She allows this because she does not want the people whom she loves and cares about to stay outside especially when it is cold. Her place is very small for the amount of money she pays in rent.*

Ms. Hass Holcombe confirmed for Chair Beilstein that there is a demand for car camping.

Chair Beilstein said car camping may be something that can be considered. His impression is that Officers do not interfere with car camping unless there is a complaint. Ms. Hass Holcombe said, in her experience, Officers try to only respond to community complaints. A bigger issue is the safety of the tent camping community. A location for tent camping would provide more safety.

Chair Beilstein said economic development in Corvallis is focused on high wage jobs. When a high wage earner is brought into the community, they compete for resources with those making lower wages. He believes the focus should be on bringing up the wages of all workers.

Chief Sassaman said this issue is a more complex conversation than just discussing an event of today or yesterday. The Central Park Tactical Action Plan is an active degree of enforcement by Officers. The Police Department tries to serve everyone and many community members around Central Park have complained to the Department about the behaviors and actions occurring in the Park. The Department has met with Neighborhood Associations, churches, and the Community Policing Forum to discuss these ideas and concepts and garner support or lack thereof for these efforts. Enforcement is behavior driven. It starts with warnings and migrates to citations. This includes camping, urinating in public, disorderly conduct, possession of drugs, alcohol-related issues, and other behaviors. Last year there was a similar issue in the downtown core when the Department received a tremendous amount of complaints. An action plan was developed and enforced. Officers are not actively pursuing behaviors not included in an action plan; however, at times complaints and actions identify an issue that needs more focus.

Chief Sassaman clarified for Chair Beilstein that within specific Action Plans, Officers are more likely to write a citation than a warning. He added that there can be many issues associated with some camps that require more focus.

In response to Chair Beilstein's inquiry about car camping, Chief Sassaman said it is not allowed under current code. Amending the code would be a decision by the City Council. He suggested Council look at the issues at the time that caused the code to be created. The Police Department is the enforcement branch of the code. Officers use their best judgment on how to apply adopted code. He added that the Department's role is to deal with behaviors, not a class of person. When Council considers a local camping ordinance, it is a community-wide issue. There are examples throughout the community that have not been included with the examples expressed during this meeting. He cautioned against eliminating ordinances without fully understanding effects and/or unintended consequences.

Chair Beilstein said the City could research how car camping in Eugene works and if local churches would be interested. Chief Sassaman confirmed that a few years ago several churches were interested in allowing car camping on their properties.

Chair Beilstein added that a code amendment could create an exception without eliminating the no-camping ordinance. The process would include identifying interested churches, objections from neighbors, and scheduling a public hearing before City Council. He noted that there are several centrally located churches that have good parking lots.

Chief Sassaman said he has no initial angst over this suggestion. If car camping is allowed on church property, the church has a responsibility for their property and they are legally liable for anything that occurs on the property. The church would need to develop a system to manage what they allow on their property.

Councilor Hann inquired about compassionate programs in other communities that Corvallis has not initiated due to a lack of staff or for other reasons. Chief Sassaman said some communities are focusing on housing first and the accountability associated with that, including establishing goals and providing services to assist individuals to become self-sustained.

In response to Councilor Hann's inquiry about amnesty related to records and/or indebtedness, Ms. Brewer said some communities have a Homeless Court, similar to Drug Court, but held off-site from the court facility. The Homeless Courts tend to be used in situations where someone is attempting to change his/her behavior and needs to clear his/her record to obtain a job and no longer have credit issues. A judge will often seriously reduce or dismiss citations as long as the person keeps on a path of not violating behavior-related ordinances. This is a more holistic support system that needs mental health, housing, child care, job training, and other services. The Municipal Court Judge has often written off fines when he knows there will not be any money to collect. At times, community service was substituted for fines; however, there are few community service opportunities available.

Ms. Brewer confirmed that the City uses a collections agency for unpaid fines and fees. There is no collection mechanism for behavior-related issues, similar to driving violations that can eventually lead to suspended licenses. Giving unpaid fines to a collections agency probably occurs 60 days or so after adjudication. The Judge and court staff will often enter into a payment agreement. As long as the offender is meeting the terms of that payment agreement, the amount due is not turned over to collections. Once they quit paying that monthly fee, it would go to collections.

Councilor Hann said if there is a way of characterizing these types of fines associated with the homeless population, the hole is being dug deeper for them. This portrays a level of insensitivity.

Ms. Brewer said some of these citations do not belong solely to a specific population. Public urination is not just a problem with the homeless population, it is also a problem with college students who are walking home after drinking downtown. Housing status or age is not considered when someone complains to the Police Department about this behavior.

Chair Beilstein said some type of forgiveness would need to be initiated by Municipal Court and include case management.

Scott Washu Treadaway said he is satisfied that everyone has had a chance to hear some of the situations and understands HSC wants to hear other sides to some of these situations. He stated appreciation for HSC suggesting how this can be approached with an upcoming meeting with the Police Chief and explaining how the Police Department decides how to use the laws. The testimony is the life experience of some of these individuals. He asked for confirmation from the Committee that the discussion is about human rights.

Councilor Glassmire said he does not like the concept of "human rights" in general, although he agrees there are human issues to be dealt with.

Mr. Washu Treadaway said there is a situation where a human has a need for a place to sleep, sanitation, and basic healthy things. Laws are setup to help with quality of life. When he refers to human rights, he means the very worst kind of quality of life. Assuming that both stories can be heard, he inquired whether there is any disagreement by the Committee that there is concern in Corvallis about basic human needs.

Councilor Hann cautioned that the discussion is not relevant to the agenda item. The Committee's agenda is related to certain proposals and solutions and the perception of the need for certain things to be addressed. He said no one is denying that problems exist; however, some of the solutions presented to the City are outside of the City's purview as previously discussed. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Simple Shelter requests and responses.

Mr. Washu Treadaway said he wants to make sure everyone is on the same page. In addition to the Simple Shelter requests, testimony was heard from the homeless community. What matters most is to make sure the Committee agrees that there are

serious basic needs not being met. Councilor Glassmire stated agreement. Councilor Hann said this is a complex problem and there is agreement on basic needs.

Councilor Hann explained that the purpose of the meeting is for people to present their testimony, not to ask the Committee questions. These types of questions do not assist the Committee in making recommendations to Council.

Mr. Washu Treadaway said he is trying to build a foundation and offer a collaborative way of problem solving. Everyone's need should be understood and heard.

Chair Beilstein agreed that there are needs in the community that are not being met. He is concerned about how the City can meet some of those needs. He was most interested in learning from testimony today about the obstacles stopping people from having those needs met.

Mr. Washu Treadaway responded that programs need to be offered that help people get into housing. People need protection against the City. His home rules and his organization is not dependent on the City. He is not satisfied that everyone is on the same page. His organization will be offering what it can to help people in this situation. There is a gentleman that has asked him to help him die with grace with his friends and Mr. Washu Treadaway plans to erect his teepee for him. Mr. Washu Treadaway is landless as is the gentleman that is dying. He inquired about his teepee and where Chief Sassaman would like the teepee erected to best meet the community's needs. The homeless community wants approval to setup camp in a specific location. The problem will continue and he wants solutions so that individuals are not posted every four days and so they can feel safe. He is very concerned about what has been happening on the planet for the last 100 years and the activities of all those people, houses, garage door openers, jobs, and consequences that cause us to question whether our children can be healthy. He would like to create a way using felt and hemp to generate a dignified way people can live both free of the lifestyle that has been exported across the world and also to provide basic needs. He is not asking the City Council to do anything; he wants the City Council to leave him to self-rule. These people do not want to be in this situation. They come into the forest to find a way to protect and help people. No one is in danger. The police are not hired to be security for commercial associates.

Chair Beilstein said the main goal of Police Officers is to secure the property rights of people who have legal title.

Mr. Washu Treadaway said he is asking for respect for those people who do not have title to property. Property rights is a system. Everyone has needs for privacy and protection. He asked about other needs that are being protected by these laws.

Chair Beilstein said the discussion is not moving toward helping the City find solutions to meeting human needs.

Mr. Washu Treadaway asked Mayor Traber (sitting in the audience) about helping the gentleman who is dying. Chair Beilstein asked Mr. Washu Treadaway and Mayor Traber to conduct their discussion outside of the meeting.

Mr. Washu Treadaway asked about who is being harmed by someone sitting on a bench at a building that is no longer in use and whose need was being met when that person was cited. He opined that no property was in danger by someone sitting on the bench. Something needs to be done to protect the indigent community. Perhaps the City needs to develop a card for indigent people that can be shown to Officers identifying them as being indigent and living on the streets. He wishes for collaborative problem solving.

Mr. Washu Treadaway referred to number seven on the staff report that relates to ceasing police action and prosecution of trespassing peaceable citizens committing no harm on commercial property.

Chair Beilstein said it is not likely the Police Department will respond differently to this issue. Mr. Washu Treadaway inquired about other actions that can be taken.

Marisha Johnson reported that according to the National Housing Coalition, a person in Benton County would need to work 72 hours/week in a minimum wage job to provide for their basic needs. The income for people on Social Security or temporary funds for needy families is about \$600/month. Section 8 Housing is available; however, the waiting list is two to five years. CSC can offer financial assistance from federal funding, but the restrictions and eligibility criteria are very narrow and must be completely met. There are huge needs for unrestricted funds that can be used for obtaining identification, rentals, and other services. A continuum of services needs to be offered. An emergency shelter and/or safe camping area are not the final answers, although they might be steps in a progression. The answer to ending homelessness is making sure people have homes. Utah has done a good job with this.

Councilor Glassmire said the solution in Utah has been mostly for single people, not families. Ms. Johnson said single people have the least amount of access to services. Without a child or a disability, single people have difficulties obtaining any services.

Ms. Johnson added that the United Nations Human Rights Committee issued a statement condemning the criminalization of homelessness in the United States. They cited specific municipal regulations and ordinances such as begging, camping, loitering, and sleeping in public.

Councilor Hann requested Ms. Johnson submit the data she testified about in writing. He expressed concern about preventing homelessness. He inquired about the level of support needed to become self-sustained if a family gets behind financially and is facing eviction. Ms. Johnson said there is no one answer, but it would most likely take six months to one year of support, and that support would not only be financial. The family would need personal and peer support from people who have gone through the same situation and are now giving back to the community. Ideally, support for rental funds would be based on the person's income. The general rule is that rent should be no more than 30% of total income.

In response to Councilor Glassmire's inquiry, Ms. Johnson said CSC can provide some funding for housing. According to the federal regulations clients must be at or below 30% of the community's median income level and completely homeless. Sleeping at a friend's house is not considered homeless. CSC also has funds for homeless prevention;

however, to access those Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds, a client has to have already been served with an eviction notice. CSC would like to prevent the eviction notice from being issued. This would require funding from another source and/or unrestricted funds.

In response to Chair Beilstein's inquiry, Ms. Johnson said there is access to unrestricted funds through fundraising events and community donations. The majority of funds come from federal and state government, grants, and private foundations. Samaritan provided \$25,000 to help people who are homeless.

In response to Chair Beilstein's inquiry, Ms. Brewer said she did not believe CSC received an allocation through the City's social service program.

In response to Councilor Hann's inquiries, Ms. Johnson agreed that the sooner the homelessness cycle can be broken the better. Jackson Street Youth Shelter does a good job working with youth to break the cycle. Youth are greatly underserved and there are many special needs with young adults. A high number of young adults experiencing homelessness are members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community. Many charitable groups are faith-based and some exclude the LGBT community. CSC is responsible for conducting a point-in-time census of the homeless population. HUD requires the census to be conducted on the last Wednesday of January. CSC is looking at ways to improve the accuracy of the census, and to include homeless individuals who are staying with friends. Ms. Johnson said she would like to work with the City on finding a more accurate way to gather the information.

Councilor Glassmire said it helps to know what resources are needed.

Chair Beilstein said he is not sure how the City can help with the accuracy of the census unless Council decides to fund it. It would most likely not be a high priority. He suggested CSC discuss the census with HOC. Ms. Johnson confirmed that CSC is a member of the HOC.

Councilor Hann said it is important to know the true scope of the problem. It may require collaboration with OSU students to obtain true census information. Without knowing the true scope it makes it more difficult to determine the needs.

Ms. Brewer said if there are items on the Simple Shelter list that HSC would like staff to pursue further, a recommendation to Council for staff direction would be appropriate. The overall issue is that there are no available funds. Rent assistance, shower facilities, lockers and/or purchasing land all requires funds that the City does not have. If Council wants to pursue some of these issues, a change in funding priorities would be necessary. Council could review the sustainable budget and/or locate a revenue stream to be dedicated to land acquisition or building apartments. Citizens may want to approve a general obligation bond to build affordable housing. Council may want to direct staff to work on one, some, or all of these issues.

Mayor Traber noted that HSC will be reviewing allocations for the social service funds under the emergency and transitional needs priorities. There may be opportunities to redistribute those allocations for some of these needs. This is an important subject that

warrants bringing more information back to HSC, either by staff with Council direction or by the community. For example, organizations that might be interested in sponsoring car camping in church parking lots may want to bring a potential proposal forward.

Chair Beilstein said when he reports on this meeting, he will inquire whether Council is willing to look at the possibility of having more public restrooms open more often and whether they are interested in considering car camping. Council may want to direct staff to gather more information, especially from other communities who allow car camping.

Councilor Hann said some of the people testifying helped the Committee understand the barriers and frustrating issues. There are many people involved in this issue that were not present. Some areas may have small solutions, such as land development or zoning that could address housing needs. The next time this issue is on the agenda, he would like representatives from Habitat for Humanity and others to attend without duplicating what has already been reported on. He understands that there is not one solution and there is a lot more to learn. He would prefer this topic be an open agenda item. Other members of the community may have something to offer.

Ms. Lwin Treadaway urged the Committee to consider the number of people who will be sleeping outside; some with tents, some only with blankets. There is no place for them to sleep. The City needs to consider putting shelter over them in a designated area of the City where they are safe and where Officers do not chase them and give citations. She inquired about what will be done in terms of tonight or tomorrow night until a solution can be found.

Councilors Hann and Glassmire both stated that the Committee will communicate to Council the concerns identified during this meeting including the request for a permanent place for camping. Chair Beilstein added that Council has previously considered camping several times and ultimately agreed not to allow it. Mayor Traber encouraged Ms. Lwin Treadaway to attend a HOC meeting.

Ms. Brewer clarified that the reason Council chose not to allow camping was related to liability, fighting, bad behavior, sex offenders camping with others, etc. To provide a camp, the City bears all of the costs for bathrooms, showers, and other facilities at a cost of hundreds of thousands of dollars and is liable for whatever happens in the camp.

Mayor Traber clarified that the camp in Eugene is operated by a third-party non-profit group. The third-party takes on all liability and employs people to work at the camp. Ms. Brewer added that most camps in other communities are located on industrial land and not in a park or near a residential neighborhood.

II. Other Business – None.

**Goal 1: Services**

<b>Strategy 1: Supportive Services</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Continue? Y or N</b>	<b>Agency?</b>
Rent Assistance	3	Different organizations had different experiences based on the populations that they worked with but that programs meeting this step seemed to be adequately meeting the need.		
Properties	2.5	Slight improvement, however, the community has seen a lot of renovations rather than added capacity.		
Transition	4	Significant progress with recognition of new services. There was concern about the occurrence of "patient dumping" by Samaritan Hospital wherein individuals in compromised health are discharged without housing options that can provide adequate medical support.		
Funding subsidies	3			
<b>Strategy 2: Medical</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Continue? Y or N</b>	<b>Agency?</b>
OHP	4.5			
211 + Navigator	2	Was concern for the continued lack of available resources.		
Fund	2			
Dental Assistance	4.5	Improved tremendously over the past five years.		

**Goal 2: Affordable Housing**

<b>Strategy 1: Emergency &amp; Transitional</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Continue? Y or N</b>	<b>Agency?</b>
4 units for youth	5	Increase the number of units to 10.		
10 units for adults	5	Increase the number to 30, up from 10.		
Mental Health transitional		Lack of knowledge on families needing treatment services.		
Shelters-non-treatment	3	Housing First has plans for a new shelter with 100 beds to open in 2016.		
Permanent shelters	3	Partners Place has 14 units for permanent housing for families.		
Sex offenders	2	No real resource is in place to ensure that sex offenders are finding housing.		

### Goal 3: Capacity for Self support

Strategy 1: Street Outreach	Rating	Comments	Continue? Y or N	Agency?
Trial position	2.5	Lacks a component for youth. A representative from Benton County Mental Health would be advantageous for a comprehensive discussion of this step.		
Coordinate among agencies	2	AST works well to meet this step but there is no link to the community's homeless youth.		
Strategy 2: Job Training	Rating	Comments	Continue? Y or N	Agency?
Specialized Training				
Job bank/Day labor site		The step lacks clarity. The Boys and Girls Club as well as the Benton Community Foundation offer job training programs to youth in the community.		
Strategy 3: Drop in Center	Rating	Comments	Continue? Y or N	Agency?
Permanent site	3			
Center for sexual/domestic violence	4.5	Due to the completion of CARDV's Advocacy Center.		
Strategy 4: Financial Issues	Rating	Comments	Continue? Y or N	Agency?
Assistance program		Vina Moses, We CARE, St. Mary's, and CSC were recognized as working towards this step, however, such resources lack collaboration.		
Strategy 5: Re-entry	Rating	Comments	Continue? Y or N	Agency?
Youth from Juvenile Facilities		Jackson Street is an important component to completing this step.		
Long term Adult		Clear bench-marks should be made so that future evaluations are more effective, and the goals should be reworked so that people outside of this committee are engaged to work with HOC in these efforts.		
Long term Elderly		Steps should be rewritten as S.M.A.R.T. goals (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely) and clearly identify the ideal populations they are intended for.		
Transitional		Teen drug court lost funding.		

## Goal 4: Societal Stigma

Strategy 1: Advocates	Rating	Comments	Continue? Y or N	Agency?
Navigation/Peer	1	The lack of clarity around the S.O.A.R. program. It was suggested to rewrite the step to refer to a Peer Support certification program. The Health Department, CSC, and the CPD offer assistance for individuals applying for SSI and SSDI.		
Street Monitor	2.5	Daytime Drop-In Center serves to meet this step but the progress that has been made is unclear. JSYS extends these services to the youth population and there are resources available through the Health Department.		
Vets	4.5	CSC has a highly funded and active Veterans Program.		
Strategy 2: Education	Rating	Comments	Continue? Y or N	Agency?
Central Info Hub	4	Always room to improve the access to information.		
Network through Agencies	3	City Club, GT, and The Advocate, have all made valuable efforts but there is still a need to join with more community partners.		
Engage Homeless	2	Needs to be better information sharing between organizations, committees, and individuals working in the camps and having more face-to-face interactions with members of the target population.		

## Goal 5: Data Collection

Strategy 1: Info Evaluation and Accountability	Rating	Comments	Continue? Y or N	Agency?
Demographic Collect	3	The committee's creation met this step but there needs to be a better system for annual evaluation and follow-up to ensure that progress is being made.		
Oversight Committee				
Regional Oversight Committee				

MEMORANDUM

March 30, 2015

TO: Human Services Committee  
FROM: Nancy Brewer, City Manager NB  
SUBJECT: Simple Shelter Request

On February 24 the group that has identified itself as Simple Shelter filed the attached list of requests with Mayor Traber. This staff report provides the Committee with information about that request.

- 1. Allow the public bathrooms on the waterfront to be available for use throughout the year.

Response: The bathrooms in all parks are closed each fall and re-opened around the first of March. Once re-opened, the bathrooms are locked at night. The winter closure is put in place to winterize the bathrooms and minimize winter effects of freezing temperatures on the plumbing. The night time closure is due to behavior issues where some people locked themselves in the bathrooms, started fires, vandalized and have monopolized the bathroom prohibiting others from using the facilities.

- 2. Allow area for free camping e.g., re-open the Willamette campground.

Response: The Willamette campground was closed several years ago following repeated neighborhood complaints about loud parties, drug dealing, and fights among those using the campground. Since the campground has been closed the Parks and Recreation Department has worked with the neighborhood, advisory board and City Council to develop an adopted master plan that includes placement of a community garden in the former campground area. The community garden is in this year’s capital improvement plan and will be constructed this spring.

- 3. Work with representatives from the homeless community to identify and allocate land and resources for the formation of a Tiny Home community.

Response: In discussions with the Simple Shelter representatives, it became apparent that they believed the City owned parcels of land that were not in use for any other purpose. The City has no land that is not already being used as a park, natural area, or for the utility infrastructure system. The City could work with the homeless community on this issue, but would need to find resources to purchase developable parcels of property and would also need to find a developer who could build affordable housing. The City would also need to address potential liability issued for activity that may occur on the City-owned property.

- 4. Increase financial investment in Corvallis Housing First program.

Response: The City invests in homeless solutions in the following programs/amounts:

Mechanism	FY 14-15 funding amount
<b>Social Services Allocation</b>	\$164,000
<b>CDBG Human Services Allocations</b>	54,000
<b>CDBG Capital Allocations</b>	75,000

The City Council could determine that the city’s current investment should be increased. The appropriate time and place for that discussion would be at the Budget Commission meetings coming in April.

5. Re-zone the old Gazette-Times building to be converted into a new homeless shelter where couples, families and people with pets can remain together.

Response: Mayor Traber informed the Simple Shelter representatives that the City does not own this facility and cannot re-zone private property in this manner.

6. Lower the fairground overnight camping fee and remove the exclusion placed on Benton County impoverished families.

Response: Mayor Traber informed the Simple Shelter representatives that the City does not own or control the Benton County fairgrounds or the rates they charge for camping. The representatives were encouraged to talk with the County Commissioners about this request.

7. Cease all police action, and prosecution of trespassing, on peaceable citizens committing no harm while found on commercial properties.

Response: The Police Department will address behaviors that are counter to legal action, including where a commercial property owner has indicated that trespassing is not allowed.

8. Cease all ticketing and prosecution with camping laws on individuals using vehicular shelter in the City of Corvallis.

Response: The Police Department does not routinely ticket people sleeping in vehicles or actively seek to find people sleeping in vehicles. From time-to-time, community members call Police seeking a law enforcement response to people sleeping in vehicles and when an individual's behavior is an issue, the Police Department will intervene to address the issue/behavior.

9. Provide coin-operated showers for the homeless to offer support for the care of their physical needs.

Response: The only location the City has for showers is at the Osborn Aquatic Center. People may shower there for the regular price of admission (currently \$5 for a single individual). The Parks and Recreation Department has discussed lower prices, but once a person has entered the facility they have full access and staff doesn't know/can't control whether people go for a swim, etc. The City has no other location for showers (i.e., no vacant buildings, no unused land), which would require building a new facility. If the City Council wanted staff to explore this issue, including potential locations and costs, a motion to pursue it would be in order.

10. Provide lockers for the homeless to offer basic security for their belongings.

Response: I have discussed this issue with Aleita Hass-Holcombe. She indicated they would need/want at least 50 lockers, around the size of the bike lockers located in the Transit Center, though taller and less "deep" and that the lockers should be sheltered, well lit, and spread around in different locations as a best practice. She also indicated that other storage businesses in town were simply too expensive, or the units too large for some people. This issue gets back to the City simply not having the location to place lockers, or the resources to acquire/construct/cover and light lockers, manage abandoned contents, etc. If the City Council wishes to have staff explore land acquisition, design, and costing information a motion to pursue it would be in order. As an alternative, the Simple Shelter representatives could approach local storage businesses to see if an arrangement acceptable to both parties could be negotiated.

Representatives from the Daytime Drop In Center, Homeless Shelter Coalition, Simple Shelter, Jackson Street Youth Shelter, CARDV, Community Services Consortium, and Community Outreach, Inc., along with a representative who works with homeless veterans have been invited to this HSC meeting to provide input and have been provided with a copy of this staff report.

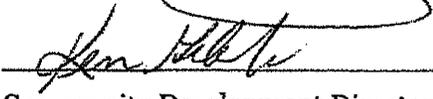
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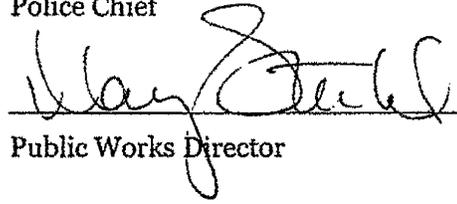
Parks and Recreation Director



Police Chief



Community Development Director



Public Works Director